

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 TRSE-00 /057 W  
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R 020613Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5696  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA  
CINCPAC  
AMEMBASSY KABUL  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 1127

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PEPR PK IN  
SUBJECT: PAKISTANI CONCERNS ABOUT INDIAN FONMIN'S VISIT

1. DURING CINCPAC ADM WEISNER'S CALL ON MFA SEC GEN AGHA SHAHI  
FEB 1, AMB ASKED SHAHI FOR VIEWS ON VAJPAYEE VISIT.  
RESULT WAS HALF-HOUR LONG STATEMENT, IN ESSENCE EXPRESSING  
CONCERN ABOUT STRONGLY NEGATIVE PUBLIC ATTITUDES IN  
PAKISTAN AND CONCLUDING THAT IF VISIT DOES NOT ACTUALLY  
SET BACK BILATERAL GOP-GOI RELATIONS GOP WILL BE HAPPY.

2. SHAHI SAID VISIT ORIGINATED WITH PUBLIC STATEMENT BY  
VAJPAYEE THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO VISIT PAKISTAN, TO  
WHICH GOP FELT IT HAD TO RESPOND FAVORABLY IN ORDER NOT  
TO SEEM TO GIVE A REBUFF. NOW, NEGATIVE REACTIONS IN  
PRESS REFLECTING VIEWS OF POLITICAL LEADERS AND THE  
GENERAL POPULATION ON WIDE VARIETY OF ISSUES SEEMED TO  
THREATEN SUCCESS OF VISIT. SHAHI HAD SPENT MUCH TIME IN  
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BRIEFING OPINION LEADERS, HAD JUST RETURNED FROM KARACHI,  
AND WAS ABOUT TO DO BRIEFINGS IN LAHORE WHERE OPINIONS WERE  
MOST STRONGLY NEGATIVE (PRESS REFLECTS THESE BRIEFINGS).

3. SHAHI SAID A NUMBER OF POLITICAL LEADERS HAD COMPLAINED  
STRONGLY THAT VAJPAYEE SHOULD NOT BE VISITING AT ALL  
AND HAD SAID THAT SUCH A SUBSTANTIVE FOREIGN POLICY MOVE

SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ALONG WITH VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE PRESS, THEY HAD TRIED TO INSIST THAT NO PROGRESS ON ANY OTHER BILATERAL ISSUES SHOULD BE CONTEMPLATED UNTIL THERE IS MOVEMENT ON KASHMIR.

4. VAJPAYEE, HE SAID, IS KNOWN IN PAKISTAN AS PREVIOUSLY MILITANT HINDU NATIONALIST DEDICATED TO REUNIFICATION OF INDIAN SUBCONTINENT, AND CONSEQUENTLY HIS ATTITUDES WOULD BE WATCHED CAREFULLY WHILE IN PAKISTAN.

5. SHAHI VOICED FAMILIAR CONCERNS ABOUT TRANSIT RIGHTS, EXPANSION OF TRADE, AND THE "COMMON MARKET" SCHEME. TRANSIT TRADE HE SAID WAS REMINISCENT OF LATE 1960'S ATTEMPTS BY SOVIETS TO ACHIEVE TRANSIT TRADE WITH INDIA THROUGH AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN; IT THEREFORE HAD A STRONGLY POLITICAL DIMENSION THAT HAS TO BE CONSIDERED. (FYI TWO INFLUENTIAL URDU PAPERS ARE PROMOTING THIS THOUGHT IN RECENT ISSUES. END FYI)

6. TRADE IS ALREADY GRAVELY OUT OF BALANCE IN FAVOR OF INDIA, HE SAID. UNTIL INDIA AGREES TO PURCHASE MORE, AND FINDS WAYS TO SUPPLY MORE GOODS NEEDED FOR PAK DEVELOPMENT AND LESS CHEAP CONSUMER GOODS, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO EXPAND. HERE AGAIN, SOME POLITICAL FORCES IN PAKISTAN ARE DEMANDING LESS TRADE, NOT MORE, UNTIL THERE IS SOME MOVEMENT ON KASHMIR. ON THE "COMMON MARKET" PROPOSAL, WHICH SHAHI SAID HAD NOT YET BEEN DEFINED EITHER BY IRAN  
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OR INDIA, THERE WAS CONCERN ABOUT MORE VIGOROUS INDIAN ECONOMY OVERWHELMING PAK INDUSTRIES THAT STILL NEED PROTECTION.

7. AS FOR POSSIBLE RETURN VISIT TO INDIA BY GEN. ZIA, SHAHI SAID IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF SUCH A VISIT SHOULD ACTUALLY EXACERBATE TENSIONS. SHAHI THOUGHT, FOR INSTANCE, THAT GEN. ZIA WOULD HAVE TO MAKE SOME PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT KASHMIR, BECAUSE OF VERY REAL POPULAR PRESSURES IN PAKISTAN, AND "WE UNDERSTAND PRIN. DESAI IS A VERY BLUNT MAN WHO MIGHT REPLY STRONGLY, THUS CREATING DISSENSION RATHER THAN PROGRESS." SHAHI THUS IMPLIED THAT ZIA RETURN VISIT TO INDIA IS VERY MUCH IN DOUBT.

8. SHAHI STRESSED THAT SHAPUR OF IRAN IS HIGHLY VALUED FRIEND WHOM PAKISTAN WOULD NOT WANT TO ANTAGONIZE, BUT GOP WAS DOING ITS BEST TO ENTAIL TO SHAH THE VERY REAL POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS THAT HAMPER FORWARD MOVEMENT IN VARIOUS AREAS OF COOPERATION WITH INDIA.

9. IN INTERESTING RECIPROCAL ASPECT OF PARA 5 OF NEW DELHI'S 1637, SHAHI SAID HE AND OTHER OFFICIALS ARE HAVING

A HARD TIME REFUTING CONSPIRACY THEORIES HERE. MANY INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE ARE ASSERTING THAT THE SPATE OF INTERNATIONAL VISITS IN THE AREA MUST MEAN THAT SOME SECRET UNDERSTANDINGS (INVOLVING GOP SELLOUT OR AT LEAST FOREIGN PRESSURE) WERE BEING WORKED OUT. SHAHI IS HARD PUT TO FIND WAYS TO DENY SUCH THEORIES IN CONVINCING ENOUGH TERMS (SEE ALSO SEPTTEL THIS SUBJECT).

10. COMMENT: SHAHI'S COMMENTS REFLECT GROWNING CONCERN IN GOP THAT VISIT, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY BILLED AS ONLY A "GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER" TRIP, NOW HAS POTENTIAL TO BECOME A MAJOR POLITICAL LIABILITY FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. GOP FEELS VERY VULNERABLE TO ATTACK BY POLITICAL LEADERS FOR BEING SOFT ON KASHMIR AND INDIAN "HEGEMONISM",  
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AND COMMENTS IN INDIAN PRESS ABOUT COMMON MARKET AND TRANSIT SCHEMES HAVE INCREASED THE NERVOUSNESS IN PAKISTAN. FACT THAT SHAH IS SEEN AS SUPPORTING INDIAN PLANS ONLY ADDS TO PAKISTAN'S FEARS AND FEELING OF ISOLATION. IT WILL BE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT FOR GOP TO FIND A FORMULA WHICH DOES NOT ANTAGONIZE THE SHAH OR THE PAKISTANI PUBLIC AND WHICH IS APPROPRIATELY FIRM BUT REASONABLE WITH INDIA. HUMMEL

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## Message Attributes

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